(a) whether several State Governments have urged the Central Government to further relax the guidelines for inclusion of schemes and assistance under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, Repair, Renovation and Restoration of water bodies and Command Areas Development and Water Management;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Central Government thereto;

(c) whether the grants to various States for irrigation schemes are provided as per the recommendations of the Thirteenth Finance Commission; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Requests from the State Governments for modifications/further liberalization of guidelines of the Programme and examination/modification in the guidelines is a continuous process taken up by the Ministry of Water Resources from time to time. Guidelines for Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme were last amended in December 2006 by the Central Government making them more liberal and oriented to giving major thrust to development of irrigation facilities in drought prone/tribal areas, in the States having irrigation development below national average and in agrarian distressed districts of Andhra Pradesh. Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra included in the Prime Minister's relief package. For the Command Area Development and Water Management programme, the condition of inclusion of project only against completion/deletion of a project has been relaxed for the remaining four years of Eleventh Plan (2008-09 to 2011-12) for projects in the Prime Ministers package for agrarian distressed districts, projects in drought prone/tribal areas, projects in States having irrigation development below national average and projects in special category States/areas *i.e.*, North Eastern Region, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Kalahandi Bolangir Koraput (KBK) districts of Orissa.

(c) and (d) The grants to the State Governments are provided as per guidelines of these programmes approved by the Central Government.

Baglihar hydro electric project

2477. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State-run Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation has affected the changes in the design of Baglihar power project as suggested by the neutral expert of the World Bank of adjudicate the dispute between India and Pakistan;

(b) whether Pakistan has expressed its satisfaction over India's willingness to affect changes as suggested by the World Bank expert; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC) has carried out the changes in the design of Bagliahar Hydroelectric

Plant as suggested by the Neutral Expert appointed by the World Bank on Pakistan's request, for Expert Determination on the points of difference raised by Pakistan.

(b) During a Tour of Inspection of Permanent Indus Commission to the Baglihar Hydroelectric Project held on 30th July 2008 on Pakistan's request, the changes suggested by the Neutral Expert and implemented by JKSPDC, were verified by Pakistan.

(c) The Neutral Expert had suggested that the power intake level of Baglihar Hydroelectric Plant should be raised by 3.0 m and the top level of dam should be reduced by 1.5 m. Under the provision of Treaty, the decision of the Neutral Expert on the matter is final and binding upon the parties, and the suggested changes have been carried out.

Pending water project between India and Nepal

2478. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of water projects lying pending between India and Nepal as on date;

(b) the time by which these projects are likely to be executed;

(c) whether Government had any dialogue with the Nepal Government on this issue; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project on the river Sharda, Sapta Kosi High Dam Multipurpose Project and Sun Kosi Storage cum Diversion Scheme on the river Kosi and West Rapti (Naumure) Multipurpose project on the river Rapti are under discussion between India and Nepal; for which India-Nepal Joint Committee on Water Resources (JCWR) headed by Secretaries (Water Resources) of India and Nepal already exists. JCWR during its 3rd meeting held from 29th September, 2008 to 1st October, 2008 recommended setting up of a three-tier bilateral mechanism consisting of Joint Ministerial Level Committee on Water Resources (JMCWR) headed by Ministers of Water Resources of India and Nepal, existing JCWR headed by Secretaries (WR) of India and Nepal and Joint Standing Technical Committee (JSTC) headed by the Chairman, Ganga Flood Control Commission (GFCC) from Indian side, to address bilateral cooperation in water resources.

JCWR also decided to set up Pancheshwar Development Authority (PDA) for the development, execution and operation of the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project.

JCWR further decided to extend the tenure of Joint Project Office (established on 17th August, 2004) for field investigation and preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Saptakosi High Dam Multipurpose Project and Sunkosi Storage cum Diversion Scheme, upto December, 2009.

Indian side of JCWR agreed to undertake a pre-feasibility study of West Rapti Multipurpose (Naumure) Project after receipt of requisite data from the Government of Nepal.